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AUTHOR Linder, Fredric; And Others
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ABSTRACT

The locus of control and value orientations of undergraduate and graduate students in schools of business and education at Virginia Commonwealth University were assessed. Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and Rokeach's Value Survey were administered to 1,139 students who ranged in age from 18 to over 40. Results indicated that older students were more internally-oriented than younger students in both schools and that males were more internally-oriented than females in the school of business. The terminal and instrumental values given highest priority by students in both schools were identical. There were significant differences between the schools for the values "A World of Peace," "Happiness," "Ambitious," and "Helpful." Partial correlations of terminal and instrumental value rankings with locus of control scores controlled for age and sex indicated that internally-oriented business and education students valued "A Sense of Accomplishment," "Wisdom," and "Self-Respect." The internally-oriented students differed regarding the values "Ambitious," "Freedom," "Equality," and "National Defense." Externally-oriented business students valued "Pleasure, "Mature Love," and "A Comfortable Life." Finally, externally-oriented education students valued "Family Security." A 16-item list of references and six data tables are appended. (Author/SW)

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Locus of Control and Value Orientations of Adult Learners in Postsecondary Education

Fredric Linder, Carroll Londoner, and David Bauer

Virginia Commonwealth University

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to describe the Locus of Control and Value Orientations of undergraduate and graduate students in Schools of Business and Education as well as the relationship between these variables. Demographic information and data from Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and Rokeach's Value Survey were gathered from 1139 adults. Results indicated that older students were more internally oriented than younger students in both schools and that males were more internally oriented than females in the School of Business. The terminal and instrumental values given highest priority by students in both schools were identical. There were significant differences between the schools for the values "A World of Peace," "Happiness," "Ambitious," and "Helpful." Partial correlations of terminal and instrumental value rankings with Locus of Control scores controlled for age and sex indicated that internally oriented Business and Education students valued "A Sense of Accomplishment," "Wisdom," and "Self-Respect." These internally oriented students differed regarding the values "Ambitious," "Freedom," "Equality," and "National Defense." Externally oriented Business students valued "Pleasure," "Mature Love," and "A Comfortable Life." Externally oriented Education students valued "Family Security."

The characteristics and learning styles of students in higher education who are using the university for career preparation, enhancement, or mid-career change have been reported by Cross (1976). The differences that these new adult learners bring with them to the classroom such as age, sex, self-reliance, and values affect the way faculty interact with them. Should faculty be concerned about these new students and perhaps modify their teaching styles to accommodate these adult learners?

Social learning theory (Rotter, 1966, 1975; Phares, 1976; Lefcourt, 1982, 1983) is used to explain locus of control and self-reliant behaviors. The locus of control construct stresses the idea that behaviors are determined simultaneously by the variables of expectancy and reinforcement value. Internal control refers to the belief that the occurrence of reinforcements are contingent upon one's own behaviors while external control refers to the belief that fate, luck, chance, or powerful others determine outcomes.

Rokeach (1973) has suggested that there are different developmental patterns in values as people age. More specifically, Rokeach (1979) described two kinds of values: Terminal or ends-oriented values and instrumental or means-oriented values. Terminal values refer to goals that are worth striving toward (e.g., self-respect and freedom), while intrumental values refer to conceptions of desirable modes of behavior that help to attain valued outcomes (e.g., honesty and responsibility).

Fuller et al. (1982) have pointed out the importance of the value placed on organizational rewards and the expectancy of obtaining those rewards in determining individual efficacy and motivation. Research on adult development and learning also suggests that the variables of age and sex

are important determinants of locus of control and value orientations (Levinson, 1978; Gould, 1978; Knoop, 1981; and Linder et al., 1985).

The systematic study of the relationship that may exist between locus of control and values of adult learners using higher education as a means of mid-career professional development, career change and/or entry into the work force has just recently begun with the study of adult learners in a School of Education (Linder, Londoner, Bauer, 1985). The present study expands the earlier work by describing the relationships between locus of control and values of adult learners in both Schools of Business and Education in a large urban university.

Specifically, the following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the locus of control orientations of adult learners in Schools of Business and Education and do older adults have a more internal orientation than younger adults?
2. Do males and females within Schools of Business and Education display different locus of control orientations?
3. What are the value orientations of male and female adult learners in Schools of Business and Education and are there age and sex differences in value priorities?
4. Are there differences between Schools of Business and Education regarding value priorities?
5. What is the relationship that exists between sex, age, locus of control, and values of adult learners in Schools of Business and Education?

METHOD

Students were enrolled in education and business programs at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond during the 1983-1985 academic years. Subjects ranged in age from 18 years to over 40. There were 413 subjects (337 females and 76 males) in the School of Education sample and 726 (422 females and 304 males) in the School of Business sample.

Rotter's (1966) Internal-External Locus of Control Scale which consisted of 23 question pairs within a forced-choice format plus six filler questions was used. The I-E scale has been judged appropriate for use with college educated adult subjects (Lefcourt, 1981).

Rokeach's (1973) Value Survey was the second instrument used and consisted of 18 alphabetically listed terminal and 18 alphabetically listed instrumental values on separate pages. Subjects rank order each list of values according to the relative importance of each value to themselves.

A three part survey comprising demographic data plus the two instruments were given to instructors to distribute to their classes. Part I requested information regarding subject's age, sex, marital status, work, and major. Part II consisted of Rotter's I-E Scale and Part III included Rokeach's Value Survey (Form D). Subjects were asked to take the questionnaires home, complete and return them via a self-addressed envelope. A 54% and 50% return rate was obtained from the Schools of Business and Education, respectively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results from a multivariate analysis of variance indicated a significant relationship existed between age [$F(148, 4314) = 2.31$, $p = .0001$)], sex [$F(37, 1080) = 5.05$, $p = .0001$)], school [$F(37, 1080) = 2.53$, $p = .0001$)] and the dependent measures of locus of control and values. There were no significant interactions. The three-way analysis of variance further indicated significant age [$F(4, 1116) = 9.01$, $p = .0001$)], and sex [$F(1, 1116) = 14.71$, $p = .0001$)] differences on the locus of control measure. There were no significant school differences nor interactions.

Locus of control (LOC) mean scores for the Schools of Business and Education by age and sex are presented in Table 1. The two-way analysis of variance indicated that older subjects were more internally oriented than younger subjects in both schools. This result is consistent with that of Knoop (1981).

Insert Table 1 about here

It should be noted that the oldest age group mean scores in both Schools were below 8.0. In most studies, a mean score at this level is considered a relatively internal orientation on the I-E Scale that ranges from a score of 1 to 23 (Lefcourt, 1982).

The data in Table 1 also indicated that the male LOC mean score was lower than the female mean score in both Schools. Males in the Business School sample were significantly more internal than females. While there was no statistically significant difference between the sexes in the School of Education, the data suggested that males were more internally oriented.

This trend toward males being more internally oriented than females was also reported by McNeill and Jacobs (1980).

The mean ranks for terminal and instrumental values and descriptive levels of significance from the two-way analysis of variance for the School of Business are presented in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 about here

The most highly ranked terminal values for School of Business students were "Self-Respect," "Happiness," "Freedom," and "Family Security." "Self-Respect" was ranked as the number one value with significant differences between the sexes and age groups as well as interaction. "Happiness" was ranked second with a significant age main effect. The oldest age group ranked it as less important than the younger age groups. "Freedom" and "Family Security" were ranked third and fourth respectively with no significant age, sex, or interaction effects.

The most highly ranked instrumental values for Business School students were "Honest," "Responsible," "Loving," and "Independent." "Honest" was ranked as the most important value for both sexes and all age groups. "Responsible" was the second most important value with a significant sex main effect. Females considered "Responsible" as relatively more important ($M = 5.73$) than males did ($M = 6.01$). "Loving" was ranked third with a significant sex main effect. Females ($M = 6.63$) gave "Loving" a higher priority than did males ($M = 8.12$). "Independent" was ranked fourth and there were no significant age or sex main effects.

Table 3 displays the mean ranks for terminal and instrumental values

and descriptive levels of significance from the two-way analysis of variance for the School of Education.

Insert Table 3 about here

The highest ranked terminal values for School of Education students were "Self-Respect," "Family Security," "Freedom," and "Happiness." "Self-Respect" was ranked as the most important value by both sexes and all age groups. "Family Security" was ranked second with a significant age main effect. The oldest age group in the School of Education ranked "Family Security" as more important than the younger age groups. "Freedom" was the third most important value and "Happiness" was fourth with no significant main effects.

The highest ranked instrumental values for School of Education students were "Honest," "Responsible," "Loving," and "Independent." There were no significant differences between the sexes or age groups for "Honest" or "Responsible." There were significant main effects and interaction for the value "Loving," and a significant sex main effect for the value "Independent." Females gave "Independent" higher priority than did males.

Table 4 displays the mean ranks for terminal and instrumental values and descriptive levels of significance from the three-way analysis of variance by sex, age, school, and interaction.

Insert Table 4 about here

There were statistically significant school effects for the terminal values "A World of Peace," and "Happiness." Business students as a whole ranked "A World of Peace" eleventh while Education students ranked it tenth. "Happiness" was ranked second by Business students and fourth by Education students.

Statistically significant school effects were also observed for the instrumental values. "Ambitious" was ranked fifth by Business students and eleventh by Education students. The results for the value "Helpful" were just the opposite with Education students giving it higher priority than Business students. It is important to note that there were more similarities between the schools on these values than differences. Indeed, the top ranked terminal and instrumental values in both schools were remarkably alike.

Table 5 displays partial correlations of terminal value rankings with LOC scores controlling for age and sex by school.

Insert Table 5 about here

A positive correlation indicated that the more internal one was the more one tended to subscribe to that value. Negative correlations indicated that the more external one was the more one subscribed to that value. The data showed that more internally oriented students within the School of Business valued "A Sense of Accomplishment," "A World of Peace," "Equality," "National Security," "Wisdom," and "Self-Respect." Internally oriented students in the School of Education valued "Self-Respect," "Wisdom," "Freedom," and "A Sense of Accomplishment." The p values, though not significant, indicated a trend toward a positive relationship between LOC and these terminal values. It

is interesting to note that internally oriented students in both schools valued "A Sense of Accomplishment," "Self-Respect," and "Wisdom." However, the relationships between LOC scores and these values are more significant for the Business students.

Externally oriented students in the School of Business valued "Pleasure," "Mature Love," and "A Comfortable Life." There was a significant relationship between externality and the value "Family Security" for Education students. The terminal values which approached significance for both Education and Business students were similar viz., "A Comfortable Life" and "Family Security."

Table 6 displays partial correlations of intrumental value rankings with LOC scores controlling for age and sex by school.

Insert Table 6 about here

The data indicated that there was a significant relationship between an internal LOC orientation and the value "Ambitious" for School of Business students. While there was no statistically significant relationship between internality and the value "Intellectual" for School of Education students, there was a trend in this direction. This trend is consistent with prior research portraying internally oriented persons as competent and intellectual (Crandall and Crandall, 1983).

There was a significant relationship between externality and the values "Clean" and "Polite" for School of Business Students. A significant relationship also existed between externality and the value "Cheerful" for Education students.

CONCLUSIONS

The significant differences between the oldest and the younger age groups as well as the sexes within both Schools of Business and Education regarding locus of control has been noted. This suggests that faculty should provide more independent self-directed learning experiences for internally oriented older students. The value "Self-Respect" was ranked as the number one terminal value for students in both schools. Faculty should be aware that student self-respect or self-esteem is related to motivation and academic achievement. Faculty as well as student locus of control and values need to be taken into account. Students should be provided with learning experiences that offer a sense of accomplishment which, in the present study, was significantly correlated with an internal locus of control. Significant differences between the schools indicated that Business students gave higher priority to the value "Ambitious" and lower priority to the value "Helpful." The results were just the opposite for Education students who gave higher priority to being helpful. Perhaps the use of cooperative goal structuring techniques in the classroom would enhance the helping behaviors of Business students while still allowing for intergroup competition. On the other hand, individual goal structuring techniques may provide Education students with more risk-taking experiences and the opportunity to be innovative.

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Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Locus of Control Scores by Age and Sex, for Each School

	School of Business			School of Education		
Age	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
18-22	326	10.42	4.22	100	10.69	4.17
23-29	224	9.04	4.35	107	8.79	3.89
30-34	93	9.16	4.18	70	8.40	3.98
35-39	48	8.60	4.16	56	8.30	3.81
40+	32	6.53	3.61	80	7.90	3.73
	F(4,713) = 8.24 P = .0001			F(4,403) = 3.39 P = .0097		
Sex	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
Male	304	8.66	4.37	76	7.82	3.50
Female	422	10.08	4.18	337	9.20	4.12
	F(1,713) = 15.44 P = .0001			F(1,403) = 3.20 P = .0743		

Table 2. Mean Ranks for Values, and P-Values from Analysis of Variance for Sex, Age and Interaction: School of Business

Terminal Value	Mean Rank	Rank of Value	P-value for Sex	Age	Sex Age	Instrumental Value	Mean Rank	Rank of Value	P-value for Sex	Age	Sex Age
A Comfortable Life	9.09	(10)	.237	.001	.996	Ambitious	7.53	(5)	.181	.421	.232
An Exciting Life	11.08	(13)	.009	.012	.184	Broadminded	8.68	(7)	.642	.210	.320
Sense of Accomplishment	8.43	(8)	.821	.001	.731	Capable	8.33	(6)	.889	.000	.694
A World of Peace	10.39	(11)	.823	.200	.336	Cheerful	10.35	(13)	.498	.749	.467
A World of Beauty	13.84	(18)	.466	.109	.715	Clean	12.41	(17)	.200	.000	.543
Equality	11.51	(14)	.001	.012	.506	Courageous	10.21	(12)	.767	.042	.543
Family Security	6.63	(4)	.342	.728	.337	Forgiving	9.79	(9)	.262	.001	.049
Freedom	6.60	(3)	.597	.924	.467	Helpful	10.17	(11)	.278	.142	.051
Happiness	6.27	(2)	.283	.001	.837	Honest	4.72	(1)	.655	.101	.464
Inner Harmony	8.24	(6)	.074	.003	.800	Imaginative	12.24	(16)	.106	.000	.795
Mature Love	8.40	(7)	.782	.333	.024	Independent	7.48	(4)	.198	.164	.644
National Security	12.69	(16)	.951	.163	.808	Intellectual	9.18	(8)	.043	.091	.366
Pleasure	11.82	(15)	.627	.000	.043	Logical	10.57	(14)	.002	.018	.823
Salvation	10.58	(12)	.182	.106	.050	Loving	7.25	(3)	.000	.139	.280
Self-Respect	5.98	(1)	.011	.002	.038	Obedient	14.98	(18)	.320	.000	.383
Social Recognition	12.96	(17)	.010	.970	.804	Polite	11.23	(15)	.816	.000	.742
True Friendship	7.82	(5)	.029	.001	.355	Responsible	5.85	(2)	.047	.536	.166
Wisdom	8.67	(9)	.353	.001	.576	Self-Controlled	10.03	(10)	.003	.991	.285

Table 3. Mean Ranks for Values, and P-Values from Analysis of Variance for Sex, Age and Interaction: School of Education

Terminal Value	Mean Rank	Rank of Value	P-value for Sex	Age	Sex Age	Instrumental Value	Mean Rank	Rank of Value	P-value for Sex	Age	Sex Age
A Comfortable Life	10.88	(13)	.020	.768	.052	Ambitious	10.05	(11)	.282	.529	.467
An Exciting Life	12.01	(14)	.206	.831	.306	Broadminded	8.60	(7)	.025	.932	.499
Sense of Accomplishment	8.51	(9)	.046	.110	.114	Capable	8.56	(6)	.555	.006	.652
A World of Peace	9.06	(10)	.035	.934	.712	Cheerful	10.41	(13)	.003	.952	.833
A World of Beauty	12.77	(16)	.193	.667	.012	Clean	12.93	(17)	.085	.413	.450
Equality	10.38	(12)	.023	.563	.796	Courageous	10.26	(12)	.544	.528	.875
Family Security	6.19	(2)	.852	.003	.386	Forgiving	8.97	(8)	.010	.313	.741
Freedom	7.13	(3)	.490	.374	.350	Helpful	8.45	(5)	.360	.892	.737
Happiness	7.16	(4)	.132	.124	.662	Honest	4.98	(1)	.140	.362	.737
Inner Harmony	7.58	(6)	.268	.017	.788	Imaginative	11.51	(16)	.095	.169	.870
Mature Love	8.46	(8)	.366	.306	.180	Independent	8.14	(4)	.045	.091	.430
National Security	12.75	(15)	.565	.019	.910	Intellectual	9.11	(9)	.259	.005	.012
Pleasure	13.15	(17)	.076	.048	.994	Logical	10.94	(14)	.002	.084	.111
Salvation	10.32	(11)	.858	.039	.604	Loving	6.26	(3)	.000	.004	.024
Self-Respect	5.38	(1)	.278	.263	.981	Obedient	14.97	(18)	.048	.000	.571
Social Recognition	13.65	(18)	.089	.969	.514	Polite	11.28	(15)	.859	.004	.023
True Friendship	7.54	(5)	.212	.001	.148	Responsible	5.77	(2)	.606	.649	.735
Wisdom	8.07	(7)	.021	.242	.537	Self-Controlled	9.80	(10)	.009	.243	.057

Table 4. Mean Ranks for Values, and P-Values from Analysis of Variance for Sex, Age, School and Interactions, Controlling for All Other Effects.

Terminal Value	Business Mean Rank of Rank Value	Education Mean Rank of Rank Value	P-value for Sex	Age	School	Interaction Present	Instrumental Value	Business Mean Rank of Rank Value	Education Mean Rank of Rank Value	P-value for Sex	Age	School	Interaction Present
A Comfortable Life	9.09 (10)	10.88 (13)	.010	.050	.079		Ambitious	7.53 (5)	10.05 (11)	.093	.193	.000	
An Exciting Life	11.08 (13)	12.01 (14)	.009	.178	.561		Broadminded	8.68 (7)	8.60 (7)	.039	.907	.283	
Sense of Accomplishment	8.43 (8)	8.51 (9)	.103	.002	.443		Capable	8.33 (6)	8.56 (6)	.593	.000	.064	
A World of Peace	10.39 (11)	9.06 (10)	.077	.472	.043		Cheerful	10.34 (13)	10.41 (13)	.006	.864	.146	
A World of Beauty	13.84 (18)	12.77 (16)	.128	.908	.025	SA(.014)	Clean	12.41 (17)	12.93 (17)	.031	.007	.749	
Equality	11.51 (14)	10.38 (12)	.000	.052	.070		Courageous	10.22 (12)	10.26 (12)	.508	.183	.626	
Family Security	6.63 (4)	6.19 (2)	.660	.007	.281		Forgiving	9.80 (9)	8.97 (8)	.007	.019	.439	
Freedom	6.60 (3)	7.13 (3)	.384	.328	.328		Helpful	10.17 (11)	8.45 (5)	.968	.514	.000	
Happiness	6.27 (2)	7.16 (4)	.064	.001	.056		Honest	4.71 (1)	4.98 (1)	.147	.266	.028	
Inner Harmony	8.24 (6)	7.58 (6)	.049	.005	.810	AC(.048)	Imaginative	12.25 (16)	11.51 (16)	.020	.009	.566	
Mature Love	8.40 (7)	8.46 (8)	.383	.093	.858		Independent	7.48 (4)	8.14 (4)	.018	.171	.004	
National Security	12.69 (16)	12.75 (15)	.678	.017	.280		Intellectual	9.18 (8)	9.11 (9)	.703	.001	.338	SC(.033)
Pleasure	11.82 (15)	13.15 (17)	.104	.000	.166		Logical	10.58 (14)	10.94 (14)	.000	.006	.523	
Salvation	10.58 (12)	10.32 (11)	.335	.036	.808		Loving	7.26 (3)	6.26 (3)	.000	.008	.252	SAC(.032)
Self-Respect	5.98 (1)	5.38 (1)	.015	.109	.741		Obedient	14.97 (18)	14.97 (18)	.029	.000	.004	
Social Recognition	12.96 (17)	13.65 (18)	.004	.947	.214		Polite	11.21 (15)	11.28 (15)	.998	.000	.068	AC(.022)
True Friendship	7.82 (5)	7.54 (5)	.020	.000	.269	SA(.045)	Responsible	5.84 (2)	5.77 (2)	.403	.575	.440	
Wisdom	8.67 (9)	8.07 (7)	.017	.006	.305		Self-Controlled	10.04 (10)	9.80 (10)	.000	.420	.096	SAC(.034)

Table 5. Partial Correlations of Terminal Value Rankings with Locus of Control Scores Controlling for Age and Sex: By School.

School of Business			School of Education		
Value	Partial Correlation	P-Value	Value	Partial Correlation	P-Value
Sense of Accomplishment	.083	.007	Self-Respect	.071	.064
A World of Peace	.080	.021	Wisdom	.069	.086
Equality	.068	.035	Freedom	.062	.094
National Security	.063	.053	Sense of Accomplishment	.060	.100
Wisdom	.061	.053	A World of Beauty	.048	.198
Self-Respect	.058	.054	True Friendship	.026	.529
Freedom	.048	.126	Inner Harmony	.024	.491
Inner Harmony	.006	.845	Equality	.020	.598
Salvation	.005	.882	Mature Love	.018	.631
Happiness	-.006	.845	Social Recognition	.009	.821
A World of Beauty	-.013	.664	An Exciting Life	-.009	.814
Social Recognition	-.019	.548	A World of Peace	-.010	.785
True Friendship	-.030	.324	Happiness	-.019	.631
An Exciting Life	-.048	.137	Pleasure	-.029	.454
Family Security	-.054	.090	Salvation	-.042	.278
A Comfortable Life	-.072	.026	National Security	-.047	.212
Mature Love	-.094	.002	A Comfortable Life	-.071	.064
Pleasure	-.123	.000	Family Security	-.077	.048

Table 6. Partial Correlations of Instrumental Value Rankings with Locus of Control Scores Controlling for Age and Sex: By School.

School of Business			School of Education		
Value	Partial Correlation	P-Value	Value	Partial Correlation	P-Value
Ambitious	.101	.001	Intellectual	.055	.168
Broadminded	.056	.089	Logical	.038	.350
Responsible	.049	.112	Polite	.037	.338
Capable	.049	.118	Honest	.021	.580
Intellectual	.034	.263	Ambitious	.017	.655
Logical	.028	.377	Imaginative	.015	.695
Imaginative	.027	.398	Independent	.010	.800
Courageous	.020	.522	Courageous	.008	.824
Independent	.003	.924	Responsible	.005	.902
Self-Controlled	.002	.939	Loving	-.002	.952
Honest	-.002	.951	Capable	-.007	.850
Helpful	-.006	.844	Forgiving	-.018	.640
Forgiving	-.015	.659	Self-Controlled	-.021	.583
Cheerful	-.023	.520	Obedient	-.023	.555
Obedient	-.021	.493	Clean	-.025	.509
Loving	-.053	.071	Helpful	-.035	.386
Polite	-.080	.012	Broadminded	-.040	.311
Clean	-.101	.001	Cheerful	-.105	.006